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Comprehension

Read the passage carefully and then answer the questions.

The passage is from 'The boy at the back of the class' by Onjali Rauf –you may want to borrow this book and read on!

The empty chair.

There used to be an empty chair at the back of my classroom. It wasn't a special chair. It was empty because there was no one sitting in it. But then, one day, just three weeks after school started, the most exciting thing that could ever happen to anyone, happened to me and my three best friends. And it all began with that chair.

Usually, the best thing about starting a brand-new year is that you get extra pocket money to buy new stationery with. Every year, on the last Sunday of the summer holidays, my mum takes me on an extra special adventure to hunt down my stationery set for the next school year. Sometimes I get so excited that I feel jumpy inside and I don't know which shop I want to go into first. There aren't many nice stationery shops where I live-they only ever have boring dinosaur sets for boys or princess sets for girls, so mum takes me on the bus and train into the city where there are whole streets of shops – even huge department stores that look like tall blocks of flats from the outside.

1. What does the writer say is the best thing about starting a new year at school?
2. What kind of stationery sets can be found in the local shops?
3. What does the writer think the department stores look like?
4. Who is the author of this story?